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and lessen overcrowding of half skilled workmen in dull times (pages 181—184).

Again, a great metropolis, like London, has a peculiar condition in the building trades, in that the opportunity of the London boy for learning an all-around trade is greatly restricted, so that the supply of skilled labor is kept up by immigration from the country. The problem, then, of the London boy stands out as one needing particular attention in the way of industrial training and apprenticeship (pages 103 ff., 192).

For various reasons, one is struck in reading this book by the wide differences of the building trades in American cities from those in London, especially in the higher rates of wages relative to other trades in America, the more excessive seasonal variations, and the more complete organization of trade unions, etc.

I can think of no more useful contribution that could be made to a knowledge of American labor than similar studies in American cities.

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Introduction to Public Finance. By CARL C. PLEHN, Professor in the University of California. Third edition, completely revised and enlarged. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1909. Pp. xv, 480. \$1.75 net.)

We have been looking for some years for a satisfactory text in Public Finance.

This new edition of Plehn (the first appeared in 1896) does not differ in arrangement and treatment from the first two editions, although ninety-four pages of new matter have been added. The book is divided into the usual four parts, namely, Public Expenditure (3 chapters), Public Revenues (11 chapters), Public Indebtedness (3 chapters), and Financial Administration (3 chapters). The principal changes over the first edition are the following: (1) more space is given to French taxation; (2) the treatment of the general property tax is greatly enlarged and greatly improved; (3) the single tax receives more attention, the arguments for, as well as the arguments against, being stated at length; (4) the official

classification of expenditures and revenues by the United States Census Bureau is stated but not followed.

The first great problem before a writer on public finance is that of classification of receipts and expenditures. It is a very serious question whether Plehn has successfully met this problem. "In the present work," he says, "the attempt has been made to use the same method of classification from beginning to end. The method used is that suggested by Professor Cohn for all public charges, and afterward developed in a somewhat different way by Professor Seligman. The charges made by the government upon individuals are regarded as varying in character according as the special benefit conferred upon the individual is made the exact or the partial measure of, or is not allowed to affect at all, the burden imposed upon him. Public revenues and public debts, have already been classified in this way, and it is very easy to classify public expenditures and administration in the same way The various activities of the State can be easily classified according to the degree of common or special benefit they are supposed, by the lawmakers, to confer upon citizens, or taxpayers A single method of classification will, therefore, pervade the work from beginning to end " But expenditures for "common benefit" and expenditures for "individuals" do not form two distinct and mutually exclusive classes; they overlap. For example, legislative expense falls under the first class; court expenses fall under both classes, according to Plehn's own treatment. He has failed to surmount the initial difficulty of classification.

The failure of the general property tax he admits and attributes largely to the laxity of administration. He also quotes with approval Seligman's triple condemnation of this tax. He advocates a separation of the sources of state and local revenues. The need of uniform accounting is emphasized. His discussion of the British Old Age Pension Law is excellent.

Viewed from the standpoint of the reader who desires only a broad general acquaintance with the historical aspects of public finance and who wants an extensive survey, rather than an intensive study, of public finance today in England, Europe, and the United States, the book is a success. But as an "elementary text book," which it purports to be, it is disappointing.

The author has had, so he states in his preface, "much experience at first hand with the actual administration of public fiscal affairs." Yet, in spite of this, the entire book is overscholastic, even to the bibliography, in which thirty-four sources are named, nineteen being in English and the remaining fifteen being in Italian, French, and German. This bibliography contains no references whatever to the reports of the special tax commissions or of the permanent tax commissions of our American states: This is an inexcusable omission. The special reports from California and Massachusetts, and the regular reports from Wisconsin and Minnesota should at least have been mentioned, to say nothing of the other states. These reports are not of mere evanescent interest; they are our real classics in taxation; they are actual contributions to the world's literature on this subject.

The author pays too scant attention to permanent state tax commissions. Only one is mentioned as a type, that of Indiana. This treatment is not only inadequate, it is misleading.

The student in elementary public finance will look in vain for a few simple yet important things, such as an actual budget of the nation, state, city, or county. And after all this is what the American student wants to know first, before he takes up the problems of other countries and other ages. The treatment of these simple, elementary things Plehn has sacrificed to a treatment of "the graduated digression of the Prussian income tax."

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Sixty Years of Protection in Canada. (1846-1907). Where Industry Leans on the Politician. by EDWARD PORRITT.
(London: The Macmillan Company. 1908. Pp. xii, 478.)

This is a very thorough and deliberate piece of work written by an able journalist whose interest in the subject is rather political than economic. It bears evidence of painstaking research among original documents, official reports, and parliamentary debates; and while very detailed in recounting the tariff history of Canada, loses none of its attractiveness as a popular presentation of a serious subject.